



PRESS RELEASE

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Launch of virtual training series on 'Effective Engagement in Parliamentary Processes' for women's organisations in the Caribbean, hosted by ParlAmericas, UN Women Caribbean, and Equality Fund

On September 9, 2022, 'Workshop 1: Parliamentary Advocacy' took place as the first session of a virtual training series on 'Effective Engagement in Parliamentary Processes' for women's organisations in the Caribbean, hosted by ParlAmericas, the UN Women Multi-Country Office - Caribbean, and the WVL-Caribbean project of the Equality Fund and Astraea.

The session opened with remarks from Ms. Tonni Ann Brodber, Representative of the UN Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean, Ms. Tamara Huggins, Director of Women's Voice and Leadership - Caribbean at Equality Fund, and Ms. Lisane Thirsk, Deputy Director of Gender Equality & Communications at ParlAmericas. In her remarks, Ms. Thirsk presented the new ParlAmericas report, "[What We Heard](#)," which shares the results of a study undertaken on the current status of parliamentary engagement efforts by women's organisations in the Caribbean region and the challenges they face.

The survey findings underscored the value seen by women's organisations in advancing their policy objectives through engagement with their national parliament, but also revealed various barriers that women's organisations experience that hinder effective engagement. These included a lack of information on parliamentary processes and agendas or specific technical skills for advocacy in the legislative sphere within their organisations, and a sense of distrust and dissatisfaction among many respondents regarding the accessibility of parliamentary processes, which it was felt required more flexibility and accommodations in order to benefit from a greater diversity of voices. The training series was designed in response to our learning from this survey.

In the session on parliamentary advocacy, presentations by Ms. Thirsk, Ms. Chantal La Roche, Senior Legal Officer at the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago, and feature speaker Ms. Marsha Caddle, M.P. (Barbados), which were followed by question and answer periods, provided participants with an overview of the importance of parliamentary engagement and recommendations on strategic moments and communication techniques for advocacy in the legislative process and with parliamentarians, among other topics.

The "Effective Engagement in Parliamentary Processes" workshop series as a whole seeks to provide women's organisations with enhanced knowledge, networking opportunities, and practical guidance to support strengthened public participation and enable greater representation of their voices in legislative decision making spaces and processes, recognising the immense value of such engagement for democratic institutions. Future sessions will focus on advocacy strategies and partnership building.

For more information about our work, see our respective websites and social media: ParlAmericas ([website](#) and [Twitter](#)); UN Women - Caribbean ([website](#) and [Twitter](#)) and Equality Fund ([website](#) and [Twitter](#)).

ParlAmericas is the institution that promotes parliamentary diplomacy in the inter-American system. Composed of the 35 national legislatures in North, Central and South America, and the Caribbean, ParlAmericas promotes cooperative political dialogue, facilitates the exchange of good legislative practices, and produces tailored resources to support parliamentarians in their work. The International Secretariat of ParlAmericas is headquartered in Ottawa, Canada. For more information, visit www.parlamericas.org or write to info@parlamericas.org.